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Khaneti
1936

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CHAPTER I.—Descriptive.

SECTION A.—General.

CHAP. I. A. General.

The Khaneti State is a small one consisting of two isolated portions, Sadhoch and Siraj. They are situated on either side of the ridge running between Baghi and Narkanda. This ridge is part of a transverse range which starts from the central Himalayas and runs south-west of the Simla Hill States. Siraj is on the southern slopes facing the Giri and is bounded on the north-east by Bashahr territory, on the south by British Kotkhai and on the west by Kotkhai and Kumarsain. Sadhoch, which is slightly smaller than Siraj, is on the northern slopes facing the Sutlej, and is bounded on the north by British Kotgarh, on the east by Bashahr State, on the south by the Bashahr and Kumarsain States, and on the west by Kumarsain. The capital is Deori some 4 miles from Kotkhai proper. The area of the State is 21 square miles.

Physical features.

The country is mountainous, the elevation ranging from 5,500 feet at the lowest level to 11,000 feet at the summit of the Hattoo peak. Other prominent peaks are Chachel, Chambi and Nari Tibas. The Hattoo peak forms the trijunction of the Khaneti, the Bashahr and the Kumarsain States.

Mines.

There used to be two iron mines in Sheeli and Allowng villages of the Siraj ilaqa, but they have not been worked since 1886.

Income.

The average annual revenue during the last five years has been Rs. 10,600, out of which Rs. 900 are paid in tribute to Bashahr State. For detailed items, see Chapter II-C. (Forests), Chapter III-C. (Land Revenue), and Chapter III-D. (Miscellaneous Revenue).

SECTION B.—History.

The origin of the ruling family is the same as that of the Kumarsain Rana, but a somewhat different version to that recorded in the Kumarsain Gazetteer is told regarding the foundation of the two States. It is as follows :—

Rana Kirat Singh.

A thousand years ago, the whole country between Kotkhai and Kumarsain and the Nogri Khad in Bashahr was under the sway of a chief named Bhambu Rai, whose fort was on a high hill some two miles to the north of Baghi. Bhambu Rai, it is said, would get up in the morning and go twenty miles over hill and dale to bathe in the Sutlej near Rampur. He would then go forty miles, as the crow flies, to Hatkoti on the Pabar to say his prayers,

CHAP. I. B.

History.

and get back to his fort, another twenty miles, for breakfast. Some time in the eleventh century Rana Kirat Singh arrived from Gya driven thence by Mahmud of Ghazni. He acquired some land at Karangla, now in Bashahr, from Bhambu Rai and settled there. In course of time he died, leaving his Rani with child, but she too died before being delivered. As her body lay on the funeral pyre on the banks of the Sutlej it gave birth to a male child, which fell into the river, but was rescued and brought back to Karangla. The boy was named Uggan Chand, and on the death of Bhambu Rai he succeeded to the latter's kingdom. He had three sons, Sansar Chand, Sabir Chand and Jai Chand.

Succession of Uggan Chand.

When Uggan Chand died, Sansar Chand got Karangla, and Sabir Chand and Jai Singh came to Khaneti, and started by jointly ruling Kumarsain, Khaneti, Kotgarh and Kotkhai. Ultimately they made a partition in accordance with the dictum of a gowalin—

Jis Kepu us Kanahar.

Jis Kekhar us Dalahar.

(For the whole story see the Kumarsain Gazetteer where it is told about Pahar Singh and Kartar Singh). Sabir Chand obtained Khaneti, Kotgarh and Kotkhai and Jai Singh Kumarsain.

Sabir Chand and his descendants.

Sabir Chand and his descendants held their Kingdom quietly for five generations. In the sixth generation two brothers, Duni Chand and Ahimal Singh, set up rival claims, formed two factions, and each seized as much of the country as he could lay his hands on. The result was that Duni Chand became the ruler of Khaneti, and Ahimal Singh of Kotgarh and Kotkhai. The present Thakur, Amog Chand, is the thirteenth from Duni Chand.

Subsequent events.

During the succeeding centuries Khaneti is said to have suffered much at the hands of its neighbours. At the beginning of the fifteenth century Tara Chand, the then chief, defeated Garhwal, but was himself crushed by the men of Kulu, who destroyed Khaneti itself, and necessitated the foundation of the present capital of Deori in Siraj.

Bir Chand and Partab Chand.

Bir Chand, who ruled about 1550 A.D., was defeated by Bashahr, and lost several villages to that State. His successor, Partap Chand, lost more territory in the same way.

The Gurkha invasion.

At the time of the Gurkha invasion Thakur Rasal Chand fled to Bashahr, and received shelter and assistance from the Raja. This circumstance, it is asserted, furnished the sole ground for any claim over Khaneti by Bashahr at the end of the Gurkha war.

CHAP. I. B.

History.

Subjection to Bashahr in 1816.

Nevertheless the sanad granted to Raja Mohindar Singh of Bashahr in 1816 by Lord Moira, the Governor-General conferred on him "in perpetuity, generation after generation, the Raj of Rampur Bashahr and Thakurais of Dhulettoo, Karangal and Kanethoo, with all their revenue and internal and external rights."

History from 1816 to 1859.

From the date of this sanad to 1859 considerable confusion existed regarding the relationship of Khaneti to Bashahr. At first the Thakur ruled over his territory, but with an agent of the Raja of Bashahr at his side. He paid Rs. 900 a year as tribute to Bashahr, and furnished a complement of sometimes ten and sometimes twenty foot soldiers to wait on the Raja. When births, marriages or deaths occurred in the Raja's family, the Thakur and his subjects were called upon to contribute at the same rate as the people of Bashahr proper, and extraordinary demands for money or labour were levied on Khaneti as well as on the rest of the Bashahr possessions.

Attempts to become independent of Bashahr.

Later on, however, affairs in Bashahr fell into confusion during the early years of the present Raja, and Khaneti began to grow independent. The Thakur refused to pay his tribute through Bashahr; the Raja retaliated by inflicting heavy fines on the Thakur and fomenting disputes between him and his subjects, the result was a condition of chaos which called for the intervention of Government.

Government's decision of 1859.

In January, 1860, it was arranged that, in consequence of the chronic disorders of Bashahr and the incompetence of the Raja, the Thakur of Khaneti should be permitted to exercise sovereign jurisdiction in his State, free of all interference from Bashahr, on condition of his making the following payments to that State :—

1. Rs. 500 on the accession of a Raja of Bashahr.
2. Rs. 900 on the marriage of a Raja.
3. Rs. 300 on the investiture of the Tika with the sacred thread.

Later history of the State.

The subsequent history of the State has been by no means happy. The incapacity of the Thakurs and the naturally turbulent disposition of the people provoked a succession of internal disorders, Thakur Saran Chand, who succeeded in 1858, was unable to maintain more than a semblance of order during the thirty years of his rule. His son, Lal Chand, who became Thakur in 1888, was insane and for some years the administration was carried on by his brother Zalim Singh with the worst results. In 1898 Zalim Singh was removed by Government and a man named

CHAP. I. B. — History.

Sita Ram appointed manager. Neither Sita Ram nor Gobind Ram, who took his place in 1899, were able to keep things quiet for very long but the manager, Gurdhian Singh, carried on more successfully. The present Thakur, Amog Chand, having been found incapable of running the administration of the State a Government Wazir was appointed in 1927.

SECTION C.—Population.

Tribes and castes.

The population according to the 1931 census was 2,797. It is, as in the other Hill States, composed chiefly of Kanaits with an admixture of Rajputs, Brahmins and Kolis. No special description of these is required.

Religion.

The best known place of worship in the State is the temple of Kali on the top of the Hattoo peak, a conspicuous hill between Narkanda and Baghi and 11,000 feet above the sea level. There are two other temples elsewhere in the State—one is at Deori, the capital of the State, and the other at Mul Khaneti.

Manners and customs.

The description of manners, customs and occupations given in the gazetteers of neighbouring States and of the Kotkhai and Kotgarh ilaqas apply equally to Khaneti.

Fairs.

Practically no fairs of note are held in the state. There are only two fairs deserving any description at all both held in the Siraj ilaqa ; one of these is the Bishu fair which takes place annually at Tateen village near Deori, on the 6th and 7th Besakh (about the 20th April) and the other which is also an annual occurrence taking place about the 6th and 7th of Sawan (corresponding to beginning of September) is known as the Rihali fair of Shirgal Dhar of the Prali village. For the last 8 years, however, the chief has held the fair at the Deori Darbar, much against the wishes of the people.

CHAPTER II.—Economics.

SECTION A.—Agriculture, including irrigation.

Agriculture is of the usual type in tracts situated on the lower plateaus. The fields on the sunny plateaus over-hanging the various khads and nallas are fertile, especially when helped by irrigation from the numerous side-streams. Those higher up are less so, and only yield one crop of Bathu in a year. **CHAP. II. A. Agriculture.**

On the irrigated lands (Kiar), wheat is cultivated at *Rabi* and rice at *Kharif*. In the unirrigated fields (Bakhal) wheat, barley, poppy are usually grown at *Rabi*, and bathu, maize koda, kangri, china, ogla, phapra, kulth, kachalu, mash and potatoes at *Kharif*.

A description of the method of cultiv a ion in Khaneti State will be found in Chapter V of the Settlement Report of 1929.

SECTION C.—Forests.

The forests of Siraj ilaqa of Khaneti State are situated on the western slopes of the Giri-Pabar divided between Kalala and Baghi, and those of the Sadhoch ilaqa in the Sutlej Valley between Kotgarh, Gahan, Baghi and Narkanda. The total acreage of demarcated forests is 5,236 of which more than half consists of high level fir, unprofitable as regards timber but used extensively for grazing. **Forests.**

The Siraj ilaqa (3,471 acres) having a general westerly aspect consists largely of predominately kail forest between 7,000 feet and 8,500 feet merging into spruce, silver fir and broad leaf forest at higher elevations with a few belts of Kharsu oak at elevations of 9,500 feet. Occasional scattered deodar are found throughout the kail and well into the fir zone. Deodar woods occupy about 50 acres mainly in Kalala forest.

The Sadhoch ilaqa (1,765 acres) having a general northerly aspect consists mainly of spruce, silver fir and broad-leaf forest with isolated kail or some groups of kail on spurs and an undergrowth of nirgals and yew on steep ground. Stands of Kharsu oak occur below Hatu above 10,000 feet, but the typical mixed spruce and broad-leaf forest extends on a cold aspect near Gahan down to 6,500 feet and includes very fine walnut and horse chestnut. Along the lower limits on warmer aspects there are pure kail woods and mixed kail, spruce, deodar and oak woods. A dense deodar pole wood lies along the Bashahr forest road. A separate block of kail and deodar forests near Kotgarh between 5,500 feet and 7,500 feet having a general north-westerly aspect includes about 60 acres of fairly dense deodar pole woods.

CHAP. II. C. Agriculture. The total dehat forest for both ilaqas is some 5,000 acres, and includes less fir, far more kail and a little chir forest. Deodar and mohru oak spinneys are common near villages. The fire of 1921 did great damage to spruce and mixed spruce and kail forest resulting in large blanks. These blanks are now being fenced and an attempt is being made to re-stock them under the new working schemes which has been prepared. Protection in both ilaqas is inadequate ; even saplings have been lopped near villages as the result of which kail trees are mostly diseased. Practically all the big trees from marketable areas have been worked out. In the near future, therefore, revenue will be derived only from thinnings in kail pole forests and from grazing fees mainly from the high level forests of Sadhoch ilaqa which is not expected to be more than Rs. 500 per annum. The net surplus income from the forests between 1911 and 1933 has been on the average Rs. 6,800 per annum.

SECTION G.—Communications.

Roads. The Hindustan Tibet Road, which is under the charge of the Public Works Department, Provincial Division, Simla, passes through Sadhoch for some 8 miles between Narkanda and Thanedar. The old road was not properly aligned in places, and has since been re-aligned. This road is blocked on account of snow during winter and the traffic between Narkanda and Kotgarh passes along the lower path which is also situated in Sadhoch. In Siraj there are two roads between Kotkhai and Baghi, but these are not in good condition. This year (1934) a bridge has been constructed on Chanot Khad at the joint expense of Khaneti and Bashahr. The other important bridge in the State is the one across Deori Khad below Deori Darbar.

Rest-houses. There is no rest-house in the State.

Postal. There is no post office in the State, but it is served by the neighbouring post offices of Kotkhai, Kotgarh and Narkanda.

CHAPTER III.—Administrative.

SECTION A.—Administrative Divisions.

Out of the two isolated portions, Sadhoch forms one separate pargana which consists of three estates each being in charge of a lambardar. The Siraj portion consists of five parganas, Basaul, Govindpur, Prali, Alawng and Shili. There are eight lambardars and a zaildar in this portion, the former being responsible for the collection of demand and imposition of begar.

CHAP III. A.

Administrative. Administrative Divisions.

SECTION C.—Land Revenue.

Prior to 1886 the State had enforced its right of ownership of all lands to such extent that a zamindar could be ousted from his holding at the chief's pleasure to make room for others offering to pay higher nazranas. Sales and mortgages were not recognized. Since the tenure of the zamindars was entirely unsafe, no improvements of the land were attempted. In 1886 a summary settlement necessitated by financial difficulties took place in which the Kotkhai rates were applied to Siraj and Kotgarh rates to Sadhoch tracts. This did not satisfy the people and complaints continued to pour in.

The first regular settlement was carried out in 1904 by M. Gobind Ram under the general supervision of the Superintendent, Hill States. The sanctioned Jama was Rs. 4,572-15-6. The total cultivated area in that settlement was 15,573 bighas. Its term expired in 1924. Owing to the mal-administration of the present Thakur the subjects broke into rebellion in 1923. This state of affairs coupled with the expiry of the settlement term necessitated the recommencement of the settlement operations in 1927; they were completed in 1929, and Government sanction was received in December last (1934). Lala Kali Ram conducted the operations from their inception to the 14th of September, 1928. After that L Amin Chand, Naib-Tahsildar, Kotkhai, was put in charge in addition to his own duties as Naib-Tahsildar, and completed the settlement in October, 1929. In accordance with the system in the adjoining States the Ka ma of 54 inches was adopted as the unit of measure and the acre was made equal to 5·38 bighas. The total area of the State was found to be 76,095 bighas. Eighteen per cent. or 13,655 bighas w re found to be cultivated, of which area 40 bighas were irrigated. Seven per cent. was classed as banjar and ghasni, and 75 per cent. as charand, forest and ghairmumkin.

CHAP. III, A. There is no raingauge in the State, but taking the figures of Kotkhai and Kotgarh, the average annual rainfall is probably about 40 inches ; in the higher tracts in the State, however, the rainfall is certainly heavier.

For assessment purposes the whole State was at settlement treated as one circle and arable land was divided into five classes according to quality ; the details are given in paragraph 19 of chapter II of the Settlement Report. The average Khewat or joint holding is 13 to 15 bighas per owner. Seventy per cent. of the total cultivated area is tilled by the owners themselves and 30 per cent. by tenants, including tenants working on State lands.

The chief was entered at settlement as the *ala-malik* of all lands in the State whether cultivated or uncultivated. The cultivators were entered as *adna-maliks* where they were found to have given nazrana for their lands, to hold pattas from the State and to have paid land revenue. A proper record-of-right has been prepared in accordance with the system in force in the Punjab, and this is now kept up to date by a trained revenue staff. The total land revenue of the State is Rs. 5,115 of which half is collected at each harvest. Rs. 922 as cesses are also recovered in two instalments like the revenue. The rates per bigha on different classes of land are as follows :—

IRRIGATED.	UNIRRIGATED.			
Kiar II.	Bakhal I.	Bakhal II.	Karali I	Karali II.
Rs. A. P. 0 14 0	Rs. A. P. 0 8 0	Rs. A. P. 0 5 6	Rs. A. P. 0 3 9	Rs. A. P. 0 2 0

SECTION D.—Miscellaneous revenue.

Revenue other than land revenue and cesses totals about Rs. 5,200. The main items are forests Rs. 1,500, fines Rs. 200, nazrana Rs. 200, excise contracts Rs. 600, stamps Rs. 640, old debts and interest, mutation fees and other miscellaneous income bringing in about Rs. 2,060.

SECTION H.—Police and Jails.

The Police strength consists of one Sub-Inspector, one Head Constable and three Constables. The police station is situated at Deori.

There is no proper State jail, but a part of the police office is utilized as a jail. The regular police force is responsible for its supervision. CHAP. III. A.

SECTION I.—Education and Literacy.

The State does not maintain any school at all, and the only educational institution which exists within the State territory is a lower primary school opened in 1929 by the Christian Mission Society, Kotgarh, at Kawanun in the Sadhoch ilaqa. Children of State subjects can go to the schools at neighbouring Kotkhai and Kotgarh.

SECTION J.—Medical.

There is no dispensary in the State, and the people who are unable to take advantage of the dispensaries in Kotkhai and Kotgarh have to depend upon local quacks. Vaccination is carried out by the Government Vaccination Staff, and the cost of lymph is recovered from the State.

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